

Ethics Reform

Like most Americans, Congressman Edwards believes that, in order to effectively conduct the people's business, Congress must abide by rigorous ethics and accountability rules.

Congressman Edwards has supported several bills strengthening the ethics process in Congress that:

- Establish a non-partisan Office of Congressional Ethics to review alleged violations by Members, delegates, officers, and employees of the House of Representatives.
- Ban travel and gifts from lobbyists and requires lobbyists to disclose campaign contributions, so that unethical lobbyists cannot buy influence in Congress.
- Close the Revolving Door, strengthening the 1 year ban on lobbying for former members of Congress preventing Members and senior staff from conflict of interest negotiations regarding employment. Prohibit Members and senior staff from influencing employment decisions of private entities for partisan political gain; violators face fines and prison terms of up to 15 years.
- Require quarterly electronic filing of lobbying reports, establishes a public database of lobbyist disclosure information, requires the House Clerk to provide public Internet access to lobbying reports within 48 hours.
- Increase civil penalties for violation of the lobbying disclosure rules from \$50,000 to \$100,000 and adds criminal penalty of up to 5 years for failure to comply.
- Require Members to prohibit their staff from having any official contact with the Member's spouse who is a registered lobbyist or is employed or retained by such an individual and establishes a public database of Member Travel and Personal Financial Disclosure Forms.
- Require a "registered lobbyist" who "bundles" two or more contributions totaling more than \$5,000 a quarter (\$40,000 an election cycle) made to a candidate or PAC to file quarterly reports with the House and Senate Clerks.
- Deny pensions to Members of Congress convicted of a felony.

- Change House Rules to end the “dead of night” special interest provisions and requiring disclosure of earmarks in tax, spending, and authorizing legislation so that the public may see exactly what their elected representatives are doing in Washington.

Earmark Transparency

In addition, the House passed unprecedented earmark transparency and accountability rules during the 110th Congress. One of these rules requires the listing the names of supporting Representatives next to each project that is specifically funded in Appropriations bills. Chet voted in favor of this new rule because he is proud to make public the funding he has secured to improve economic development and quality of life in the 17th district. While only a small percentage of the funds in most appropriations bills are designated for locally advocated projects, Chet will continue to fight to include local priorities in these bills to ensure our district receives its fair share of its tax dollars back.

To increase transparency in the 111th Congress, our office has also made available the following appropriations requests for fiscal year 2010.

[Appropriations Request](#)

[Transportation Reauthorization Request](#)

Any thoughts? Comments? Questions? Let us know what you [think](#) .

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